



University at Buffalo
The State University of New York

Office of the Vice President for External Affairs

Government and Community Relations

September 6, 2006

Chairman Tom Coburn
Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management
Attn. Anna Shopen
439 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Coburn:

Thank you for your interest in the University at Buffalo. I am writing in response to your letter to President John B. Simpson dated July 27, 2006 regarding the University's federal relations and appropriations efforts. President Simpson has asked that I respond in my capacity as Assistant Vice President for Federal and Agency Relations.

As you may know, the University at Buffalo (UB) is the State University of New York's premier public center for graduate and professional education, as well as the NY's largest and most comprehensive public university. A member of the prestigious Association of American Universities, UB stands in the first rank among the nation's research-intensive public universities. Our strengths in medicine, engineering, and computer science enable us to conduct multidisciplinary research and provide education at a level of excellence that few universities can match. The faculty of UB's professional schools share an unusually strong research orientation with their counterparts in the arts and sciences, and together they have established an outstanding record of research, scholarship, and creative activity.

As a nationally recognized research institution with world-class faculty, UB seeks support for its education, research and public service missions from a variety of sources including the state and federal governments as well as through private and philanthropic endeavors. More than ever before, the public research university, as a site of intellectual rigor and discovery, serves to fuel cultural, technological and economic development. Industries are increasingly dependent on continued and often rapid innovation and a well-educated, skilled workforce to be competitive nationally. Academic research is a vital component of our overall national research efforts because of its ability to concentrate on fundamental or basic, long-term research and engage in collaborative and intellectually adventurous, even risky, projects that span many disciplines and interests.

To that end, in 2004-2005 expenditures for the University at Buffalo, as reported in the FY 2005 National Science Foundation Report, totaled \$267 million, of which \$152 million was from federal sources. Federal R&D expenditures in 2003-2004 were \$144 million, 2002-2003; \$130 million, 2001-2002; \$121 million and 2000-2001; \$97 million.

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In this century, we believe the economic impact of the research university upon its regional and statewide communities will increase significantly. To illustrate this point, we are proud to say UB's total economic impact on Western New York in the past year was more than \$1.25 billion.

The University at Buffalo fosters a world-view that is broad and complex in scope, enlightened rather than narrow, and open to possibility rather than constricted by bias. The University is critically engaging with its communities-regional, statewide, national, and global-in new ways that are serving to redefine its intellectual, cultural and economic impact for the 21st century. The name first given to the school demonstrates the depth and centrality of our relationship to the community at large: the University of Buffalo. Millard Fillmore, UB's first Chancellor, remarked upon the special connection between university and city at the university's first commencement exercises in 1847, saying:

This, then, is a new era for the citizens of Buffalo. Here for the first time we see assembled the officers and professors of a literary institution, located in our midst, and destined we trust to shed its literary and scientific blessings, not only upon the youth of our own prosperous city, but upon those of the surrounding county and adjacent states.

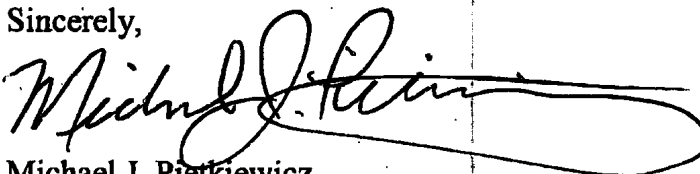
Clearly, UB was intended to fulfill a very great public trust. Therefore we believe it is our obligation to ensure that every dollar of investment that the University at Buffalo receives – whether from private, foundations, state or the federal government - is utilized in an appropriate and effective manner that truly benefits our communities and serves the public good.

The University at Buffalo does not have a stated policy regarding Congressional earmarks nor does the University restrict our faculty from collaborating with colleagues at other universities that accept earmarked federal funding. However, the University supports the principle that all research funding under the American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI) should be awarded on the basis of merit, preferably based on peer review.

UB's Office of Government and Community Relations maintains a small, one person federal relations operation which files semi-annual federal lobbying disclosure reports as required by the rules of the House and the Senate. UB has employed contract lobbyists in the past to engage our federal legislators in the area of higher education policy and funding and currently is the recipient of representation from a firm retained by the State University of New York (SUNY) to represent its diverse 64 campus statewide system.

In closing, thank you for your letter. We work closely with our congressional delegation and believe that it is incumbent upon both our institution and Congress to practice sound judgment not only when considering whether a project merits federal funding but also in the appropriate execution of that funding once granted. If you require additional information, I respectfully suggest that you reach out to your Congressional Colleagues from New York in both the House and Senate.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Pietkiewicz

Assistant Vice President for Federal and Agency Affairs